

**AWDURDOD TÂN AC ACHUB CANOLBARTH A GORLLEWIN
CYMRU**



MID AND WEST WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

**NOTE: THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO CONFIRMATION BY THE PERFORMANCE, AUDIT
AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AT ITS NEXT MEETING**

**COFNODION CYFARFOD Y PWYLLGOR
ADOLYGU AC ARCHWILIO PERFFORMIAD
MINUTES OF THE PERFORMANCE AUDIT AND
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**DYDD LLUN, 14 HYDREF 2013
MONDAY, 14 OCTOBER 2013**

**YSTAFELL CAER, PENCADLYS Y GWASANAETH TÂN, CAERFYRDDIN
CAER SUITE, FIRE SERVICE HEADQUARTERS, CARMARTHEN**

11.00 – 12.50

73% PRESENOLDEB/ATTENDANCE

Presennolyn y Cyfarfod/Present at Meeting:

CHAIR	T Hennegan
IS-GADEIRYDD/DEPUTY CHAIR:	K Curry
AELODAU/MEMBERS:	Cyng/Cllrs: J Curtice, W E Evans, P James, K Pearson, R Rees-Evans, K Tampin, G Walker, A Wilcox, J Williams
YMDDIHEURIADAU/APOLOGIES:	J Bayliss, R James, G Jones
YN BRESENNOL /IN ATTENDANCE:	D Daycock, R Smith, P Bates, E Aitken, C Davies, D Masson, J Maunder, S McLinden, Cllr R Llewellyn (observer), Cllr S Paddison (observer)

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Bayliss, R James and G Jones.

2 DECLARATION BY MEMBERS OF ANY PERSONAL OR PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS

All Members present declared that they had a personal interest in any business relating to, or affecting their own Constituent Authority.

3 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PERSONAL MATTERS

The Chair informed Committee that Councillors R Llewellyn and S Paddison were in attendance as observers.

The Chair highlighted a number of positive press releases that had been issued in relation to recruitment, the Annual Improvement Plan consultation and public engagement.

The Chair also referred to a fire incident in Aberystwyth on 1st October 2013, and Members commended the rescue efforts of all staff involved; tragically, however, the incident had resulted in a loss of life. Members were further informed of an incident involving an explosion within the Pembrokeshire area which was currently on-going.

4 TO CONFIRM AND SIGN AS A TRUE RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE PERFORMANCE AUDIT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 22 JULY 2013

The minutes of the Performance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 22 July 2013 were received and confirmed as a true record of the proceedings.

Matters Arising from the meeting held on 22 July 2013

A Member referred to item 8, paragraphs 4 & 5 of the minutes in relation to community safety output and the guiding principles of self rostered crewing. A discussion ensued regarding the recent correspondence that had been issued to Members which provided a response to the queries raised, and the Director of Delivery extended another opportunity to meet with any members of the Committee on conclusion of the meeting in order to clarify any points of misunderstanding.

Reference was made to item 11 of the minutes whereby it was confirmed that representatives from Bronglais Hospital and Aberystwyth University had been invited to the Fire Authority meeting on 9 December 2013 to provide a presentation on unwanted fire signals and automatic fire alarms.

The Director of Resources highlighted item 12 of the minutes and clarified that following discussion with the Internal Auditor, there was no further relevant information regarding the internal audit plan for 2013/14, therefore there had been no requirement for Committee to consider an additional report.

In response to a query from a Member in relation to the additional audit fee of £10,464 outlined in item 17 of the minutes, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer clarified that despite the extensive fieldwork already undertaken by the Wales Audit Office, its investigation remained on-going, which would result in escalating costs to the Authority and increasing demands on staff time.

5 TO RECEIVE THE PERFORMANCE AND BUSINESS ASSURANCE REPORTS TO SEPTEMBER 2013

The Head of Strategic Planning and Performance introduced the Performance and Business Assurance report to September 2013 to the Committee which provided an accurate reflection of the Service's performance during the second quarter reporting period. Committee were provided an overview of the four Appendices set out in the report, as follows:

Departmental and Command Action Plans (Appendix 1)

Members were referred to Appendix 1 of the report which contained a commentary from each Head of Department or Command using a Red, Amber Green (RAG) status to reflect how their Department or Command had progressed. Members were informed that of the 91 actions, 73 were on target, with 17 targets being within the acceptable tolerance level (amber) and one being off target. Committee were assured that the Service were acutely aware of the actions that were required to ensure that the targets would be met within required timescales.

Committee considered the key areas of performance and a number of areas requiring further clarification were addressed.

In response to a request from Members, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer confirmed that the wording in the introduction of the document would be strengthened for future reports in order to further clarify the methodology in which each project's percentage figures were determined. He would also remind managers that acronyms were to be avoided.

Of particular interest to Members was the work relating to improving the availability of water supplies for firefighting activities. Reference was made to a meeting that had been scheduled for 12 September 2013 and following an update from the Director of Delivery, it was agreed that the minutes of the meeting would be circulated to all Fire Authority Members.

Performance Indicators - Performance against targets set for Strategic and Core Indicators (Appendix 2)

The Head of Strategic Planning and Performance reported that the performance information as at September 2013 and projected for the 2013/14 reporting period was set out in Appendix 2 of the report.

Of the 34 statutory and core performance indicators which measured performance on corporate health and service delivery, 24 remained within the target tolerance. The 10 indicators that were not within target tolerance related to sickness, fires, deliberate fire injuries and smoke alarm ownership.

Attention was drawn to the corporate health indicators whereby Members were informed that challenging targets had been set whereby the Service were performing well in comparison with other public sector organisations across Wales.

In response to a query, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer clarified that the performance indicators outlined within the report, were set by the Welsh Government and that figures in relation to number of days lost through suspension were within the remit of the Resource Management Committee.

A discussion ensued regarding the Landlord Accreditation Scheme which outlined best practice procedures for landlords, including fire safety. Councillors K Pearson and G Walker declared a personal interest in respect of being accredited landlords, and Councillor J. Williams as a member of a Credit Union which used Fire Alarms/sprinklers.

Following a query from a Member, it was confirmed that the Domestic Fire Safety (Measure) Wales, requiring all new builds to be fitted with sprinklers would be enacted on a phased implementation basis from April 2014 onwards, to lessen the financial burden on businesses to implement.

Business Assurance Progress Report (Appendix 3)

The Head of Strategic Planning and Performance reported that the Business Assurance update provided a summary of progress and recommendations that had been made as part of the external scrutiny arrangements for the Authority.

It was noted that of the 22 objectives, 20 were completed with the remaining 2 being within the acceptable tolerance threshold.

Corporate Projects Update (Appendix 4)

The Head of Strategic Planning and Performance provided a summary of progress against the corporate projects in terms of projects pending subject to a feasibility study, projects currently running, projects completed and the projects which the Service contributed to or led as part of the National Issues Committee. It was noted that of the 13 projects currently underway, 11 were on target, with the remaining 2 being within the acceptable tolerance threshold.

Following a query from a Member, the Director of Delivery clarified that a report would be provided to a future Committee meeting which would encapsulate the operational benefits and cost of the Small Fires Unit.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that the report be noted.

6 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT SCRUTINY EXERCISE

The Chair provided an overview of the Transport Department Scrutiny exercise undertaken by Fire Authority Members on 16 July 2013. Of particular interest to Members were the significant efficiencies and improved working practices which had been achieved following the external audit of the Transport function in 2011.

Attention was drawn to Appendix 1 of the document whereby Members agreed amendments to the attendance list.

Committee were also pleased to note that the department hoped to introduce a modern apprenticeship scheme in order to maintain the specialist skills and expertise of those staff who were due to retire over the next few years.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that

- 1. The report be noted***
- 2. The recommendations made by Members which were being progressed by Officers and Directors be noted.***

7 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS FOR THE PERIOD 1 OCTOBER 2012 TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2013

The Head of Corporate Communications and Democratic Services introduced the Compliments and Complaints report for the period 1 October 2012 – 30 September 2013, which had been prepared in line with the Code of Corporate Governance. The figures had been updated since the report had been circulated and were set out in Appendix 1 to the report, and it was confirmed that a total of 14 complaints had been received during the reporting period, 4 of which were determined as ‘upheld’, 9 of which were ‘not upheld’, and 1 complaint was withdrawn.

Members were informed that the decrease in formal complaints received could, in part be attributed to the introduction of the Service’s two stage complaints procedure, based on the Model Public Service Complaints Policy and Guidance.

Given the large geographical area covered by the Service it was emphasised that the number of complaints determined as upheld were extremely low. It was further reported that all complaints received had been responded to within the timescales set by the Service.

Following a request from a Member it was agreed that specific information regarding each complaint and compliment be included in future reports, which could be presented in a redacted format in compliance with the Data Protection Act 1988.

The Head of Corporate Communications and Democratic Services drew Members’ attention to the 86 compliments received during the reporting period, and she stated that it was pleasing that members of the public made a concerted effort to acknowledge the sterling work of the Service and recognised that such expressions of appreciation were of value in identifying best practice and boosting staff morale.

Committee further noted that positive feedback was also received via social networking sites, particularly in response to station open days.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that the report be noted

8 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE ALL WALES COMMUNITY SAFETY AWARENESS EVENT AT THE SENEDD

The Director of Risk reported that in response to a request from Lesley Griffiths A.M., Minister for Local Government and Government Business, an all Wales Fire and Rescue Service Community Safety Awareness Event had been scheduled at the Senedd on the 21st October 2013. It was noted that the aim of the event was to showcase the wide range of proactive community safety work that was undertaken across Wales by the three Fire and Rescue Services.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that the report be noted

9 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE EVALUATION OF COMMUNITY SAFETY

The Director of Risk presented a report on the evaluation of community safety initiatives and engagement. Members were informed that there was an increasing need to have effective evaluation of these initiatives in order to evidence that resources were invested in the right areas and to ensure that Welsh Government grant funding delivered the appropriate outcomes.

Committee considered the range of proactive activities undertaken by the community safety department in terms of Arson Reduction, Safeguarding, Service Youth Team, Home Fire Safety Checks, Partnerships, Third Sector, Road Safety and Business Fire Safety.

Members commended the department for its sterling proactive community safety initiatives which had resulted in a positive impact within the communities served. Members in particular praised the Phoenix project and its parental course which was felt to be of great benefit to young people. The importance of grant funding to maintain and extend such projects were emphasised by Committee and Members were disappointed to note that the Young Firefighters Scheme did not currently receive any grant funding.

The Chief Fire Officer reported that the Minister for Local Government and Government Business had been particularly impressed with the Phoenix project and would be making a Ministerial Statement in order to highlight the importance of the prevention strategies in place across Fire and Rescue Services.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that the report be noted.

10 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS FOR FFYNNON

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer provided Committee with an update regarding Ffynnon, the Authority's performance management software. Committee were informed that the Welsh Government's existing contract with Ffynnon, which the Authority currently utilised, would conclude on 30 June 2014, prior to the introduction of the Welsh Government's replacement solution. Members were assured that the Service had recognised the potential risk of the new system not being delivered within the tight timeframes set and had therefore already put in place alternative arrangements to maintain business continuity for performance.

Following a query from a Member it was confirmed that the Authority had been mandated to move away from the previous CorVu system to the Ffynnon system at no direct cost to the Authority. A Member raised concerns regarding the Welsh Government's expenditure on a new Performance Management System given the Welsh Government's extensive investment into the Ffynnon system. The Chief Fire Officer duly reported that early indications suggested that the Authority would not be mandated to implement the new system, however an informed decision regarding its introduction, or that of an alternative system, would be made in due course.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that the report be noted.

11 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

The Head of Strategic Planning and Performance introduced a report on the Annual Performance Assessment which was required to be published by 31 October 2013.

Attention was drawn to the Performance Assessment 2012/13 outlined in Appendix 1 of the report which had been produced in accordance with the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 whereby all Welsh Improvement Authorities were required to produce a performance assessment on their achievements against the previous year's Annual Improvement Plan.

Committee were provided with an overview of the Authority's performance assessment for 2012/13 which incorporated all of the recommendations identified by Wales Audit Office. The Chief Fire Officer commended the report which highlighted the Authority's significant achievements during the year and which, in his view, demonstrated the good work undertaken by the Fire and Rescue Service. Members emphasised the importance of obtaining input from Assembly Members into the Authority's Plans. It was therefore agreed that the Assembly Members would be approached during the forthcoming community safety event at the Senedd on 21 October 2013 to highlight the work of the Authority as outlined within the Performance Assessment report and to seek their views on the Annual Improvement Plan 2014/15.

A discussion ensued regarding the success of the first responder scheme which had been in operation within the Authority for a number of years and which enabled Fire Service personnel to provide an initial response to medical emergencies. At this point Councillor W E Evans declared a personal interest by virtue of his association with the Welsh Ambulance Service Trust. In response to a request from a Member, the Director of Delivery reported that he would endeavour to obtain information from the Wales Accord for the Sharing of Personal Information (WASPI) in relation to the number of individuals resuscitated as part of the first responder initiative.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that

- 1. The report and progress made to date be noted.***
- 2. The publication be approved.***

12 TO CONSIDER ANY OTHER ITEM OF BUSINESS THAT BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES, THE CHAIR DECIDES SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS A MATTER OF URGENCY PURSUANT TO SECTION 100(B)(4) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

There were no items of urgent business.

The meeting closed at 12:50.